United Nations DP/2007/9

Executive Board of the
United Nations Development
Programme and of the
United Nations Population Fund

Distr.: General
21 December 2006

Original: English

First regular session 2007
19 to 26 January 2007, New York
Item 6 of the provisional agenda
Gender in UNDP

Progress report on the implementation of the 2006 gender action plan*

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*The compilation of data required to provide the Executive Board with the most current information has delayed submission of the present report.

06-67833 (E) 110107

I. Introduction

1. The 2006-2007 gender action plan was endorsed by the Executive Board in its decision 2006/3 at the first regular session 2006. The Board requested the Administrator to report on progress made by UNDP in implementing the gender action plan and meeting the commitments made by management in response to the 2005 evaluation on gender mainstreaming in UNDP. Since the gender action plan incorporates the recommendations of the evaluation, the present progress report responds to both requests. In implementing the gender action plan in 2006, the main achievements were: an increase in the visibility of gender issues; strengthened in-house capacity to mainstream gender; and improvements in measuring progress and accounting for gender equality results.

2. Initiatives were taken to deepen accountability for gender equality results within UNDP. The Gender Steering and Implementation Committee (GSIC), chaired by the Administrator, meets bi-monthly to review the progress of each Bureau in implementing the gender action plan. The establishment of the GSIC has sent a strong message about the importance of demonstrable gender equality results. Together with other accountability instruments, such as the personal compacts between senior managers and the Administrator, the GSIC can be a powerful mechanism for gender mainstreaming. This report highlights progress in 2006 in establishing a range of accountability measures, including refinement of the gender score card. Work in this area will continue in 2007.

3. 2006 marked the expansion of capacity-building initiatives at the regional and national levels. A total of 95 country offices received support for gender training, developing gender mainstreaming strategies and establishing gender thematic groups. The remaining 32 country offices will receive similar support in 2007. Preliminary results validate the usefulness of these initiatives as country offices have successfully established gender thematic groups and developed their own indicators of progress towards gender equality. Requests were received for additional training, particularly to help countries integrate gender in national development plans and factor the issue of violence against women into governance and development programmes. The UNDP Gender Team, in conjunction with the regional bureaux and the practices, will continue to support the capacity-building efforts of country offices and their national counterparts in gender-responsive policy formulation, as well as programme planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The present report includes a full account of internal capacity-building activities in UNDP, which aim to enable every staff member to both integrate a gender perspective in their work and measure 'gendered' impact. In the next planning cycle an organization-wide evaluation of capacity-development for gender mainstreaming will be undertaken with a view to improving quality and effectiveness.

4. As a result of consensus on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the debate has shifted from 'why' the world should meet the global challenge of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment to 'how'. National governments and regional and civil society organizations seek the know-how, good practices, and tools to help them deliver on MDG 3 – gender equality and women's empowerment. During this reporting period, there has been steady progress in developing such knowledge products. A number of products, including those

resulting from the UNDP-sponsored global conference on gender, poverty and the MDGs, were published and disseminated widely.

5. To anchor gender mainstreaming within the organization, the Administrator invested $10 million of core resources to implement the gender action plan and expanded the UNDP Gender Team by establishing two new senior posts. Some regional bureaux have also recruited senior gender advisors at headquarters to complement the work of gender advisors in the regional centres. These steps have brought greater visibility to gender issues and will facilitate system-wide co-ordination to deliver effective gender-related policy advisory services; knowledge-based tools and products; and support for monitoring, evaluation, and advocacy. This new 'architecture', however does not negate the responsibility of each staff member to mainstream gender in their own work.

6. As Chair of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) and manager of the resident coordinator system, UNDP plays an important role in promoting a more cohesive and coordinated approach to United Nations support. In 2006, UNDP partnered with UNFPA, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) to facilitate the first-ever United Nations country team (UNCT) joint reporting on the status of implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women to the 36th session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and has continued to provide support for subsequent UNCT reporting. UNDP has also helped to boost the capacity of UNCT gender thematic groups to engender common country assessments (CCAs) and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs). The UNCTs are encouraged to undertake joint programming.

7. The UNDP partnership with UNIFEM continued to grow as a result of collaboration on gender-sensitive budgeting, women's participation in decision-making, MDG country reporting, poverty monitoring, and addressing the gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS. In follow-up to the joint missions of the Director of the Bureau for Development Policy (BDP) and the UNIFEM Executive Director in 2004, the preparatory phase of the UNDP-UNIFEM joint programme for advancing gender equality legislation in the workplace in the Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region was initiated. Joint work planning exercises with UNIFEM will be undertaken in 2007, and a memorandum of understanding has been proposed.

8. The UNDP strategic plan, 2008 -2011, is currently being developed through a consultative process. To develop a revised UNDP gender strategy for integration into the strategic plan and unit work-plans, the UNDP Gender Team will participate in a retreat with headquarters and field-based advisors and focal points early in 2007. The retreat will facilitate agreement on how best to include gender equality and women's empowerment in the strategic plan, ensuring that it is both a key development goal with intrinsic value and a means for achieving other development objectives.

9. The second section of the present report highlights progress toward the specific goals outlined in the corporate gender action plan:

(a) Commitment: leadership commitment and performance indicators;

(b) Capacities: gender training, knowledge sharing and networking;

(c) Communication and visibility; and

(d) Core and non-core financial resources aligned with policy commitments.

10. The third section articulates key lessons learned in 2006 while the forth section demonstrates the range of country level initiatives. The last section clarifies the respective roles and responsibilities of UNDP and UNIFEM, as requested by the Executive Board in its January 2006 session.

II. Progress towards specific goals of the gender action plan

Goal 1. Commitment and performance indicators:

11. In line with the commitments announced by the Administrator at the first regular session of the 2006 Executive Board, the Gender Steering and Implementation Committee (GSIC), chaired by the Administrator, has been meeting regularly. Thus far there have been five meetings of the GSIC, allowing the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (RBAP), the Regional Bureau for Africa (RBA), the Regional Bureau for the Arab States (RBAS) and the Regional Bureau for Latin American and the Caribbean (RBLAC) to report on their progress in implementing the gender action plan. The regional bureaux reported on the development of their individual gender action plans for implementing the corporate gender action plan and the establishment of regional gender committees that mirror the Administrator's GSIC. The Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (RBEC) is due to report in January.

12. All regional bureau directors are expected to conclude their personal gender compacts by end December. These compacts are based on the corporate gender action plan and address issues specific to each region. They are a means of holding the directors personally accountable for gender mainstreaming and empowerment of women.

13. Gender issues are increasingly addressed in the agenda of senior management strategic planning and policy meetings of resident coordinators and resident representatives. For example, the RBA strategy for the implementation of the corporate gender equality policy was revised and endorsed by the resident representatives at the RBA resident representative cluster meetings held in March-April 2006. Similarly, gender is now included on the first day of the annual RBAP resident representative/deputy resident representative cluster meetings. At the April 2006 cluster meeting, gender was the subject of the first substantive session on the agenda, sending a strong message that gender equality is a priority for the Asia and Pacific for the Bureau.

14. All policy, programme and project documents undergo a systematic gender analysis as part of an organizational strategy for effective gender mainstreaming. RBAP has endorsed gender analysis as a key operational principle for gender mainstreaming by making it a prerequisite of all programming. The Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) approved a policy to ensure gender sensitivity in all proposals presented for funding under the UNDP thematic trust fund for crisis prevention and recovery and TRAC-1.1.3.

15. An analysis of the 'gender driver' in the 2005 MYFF reveals that although understanding of this tool among staff has improved, it still lags behind the other

five 'drivers of development effectiveness'. This analysis, undertaken by BDP and all the regional bureaux, has been shared with country offices.

16. The Office of Human Resources has developed indicators to assess staff and managers' competencies in gender sensitivity under the domain of 'core values and corporate commitment'. RBAP has mandated that gender be one of the five key results in the results and competency assessments (RCAs) of all resident coordinators and Resident representatives in the region for 2006. Similarly, BDP requires all its practice leaders to have gender as one the five RCA key results.

17. Guidelines and primers for effective gender mainstreaming have been developed for the implementation of the MYFF gender driver. The Environment and Energy Group, for example, has developed guidelines for each of its service lines, and the Democratic Governance Group has developed gender mainstreaming primers for each of its service lines.

18. A mock test-run of the gender scorecard validated its user friendliness. Roll-out is planned for January 2007.

19. A review and synthesis of global indicators for tracking progress towards gender equality is being undertaken to establish specific performance indicators across all country offices and organizational units.

20. Operational principles on gender equality to guide UNDP policies and operations are being finalized. They will provide a framework against which progress in different parts of the organization can be measured.

21. Proposals submitted by country offices for the implementation of gender mainstreaming strategies were reviewed, and grants amounting to $50,000 per proposal were approved for 50 country offices under the GMI. The regional bureaux are complementing that support at the regional level through the regional centres and the subregional resource facilities.

Goal 2. Capacities: gender training, knowledge sharing and networking

22. Four thousand and ninety-two UNDP employees have been certified by the UNDP Learning Resources Centre (LRC) as having completed the mandatory community-level e-learning course on gender.

23. The new Virtual Development Academy e-learning module on gender mainstreaming, developed by LRC, was rolled out in August 2006.

24. The Institute@ UNDP pilot phase on the role of men and boys was completed by LRC, which now stands ready to offer specific gender-related courses to national partners on demand.

25. A series of trainings on gender mainstreaming tailored for managers and staff took place throughout 2006. Ten LRC management induction programmes, which included sessions on gender mainstreaming, were conducted for resident coordinators, resident representatives, deputy resident representatives, junior professional officers, national professional officers and operations managers. Forty UNDP staff were trained and designated 'gender trainers'.

26. RBAS organized a one-day staff training on human rights based approaches and gender equality.

27. Similarly, BCPR held one-day trainings for its staff in New York and Geneva.

28. RBA and BCPR organized a regional workshop for staff on gender in conflict prevention and resolution.

29. To enhance gender mainstreaming efforts at the organizational and programme levels, the Environment and Energy Group organized a mandatory gender training for its staff, including senior managers. In addition, an 'environment and energy practice-wide resource kit' has been developed for training purposes. The kit includes a number of illustrative case-studies and exercises with appropriate sketches and photographs to address frameworks for sustainable development, water governance, energy services, land degradation, biodiversity conservation, and control of emissions of ozone-depleting substances and persistent organic pollutants.

30. The HIV/AIDS practice group organized a regional training-of-trainers for national partners in Asia in order to initiated community conversations addressing stigma, discrimination and gender power relations in the context of HIV/AIDS.

31. The UNDP Leadership Development Programme partnered with UNIFEM in Ethiopia to develop the capacity of the judicial sector and other national agencies in upholding and promoting the rights of women to inheritance and property in the context of HIV/AIDS. This has resulted in six breakthrough initiatives to address inequitable rights.

32. Ongoing support for enhancing the capacities of UNCT gender theme groups is being provided in an additional thirty countries by building on the experiences of the gender thematic trust fund (GTTF).

33. A new informal on-line network has been launched for core gender practitioners in UNDP to exchange regional experiences, lessons learned and progress toward the achievement of the gender action plan, 2006 -2007.

34. The Evaluation Office has taken steps to ensure that gender mainstreaming is a key component of all evaluation exercises.

35. Public policies and national budgets are increasingly incorporating gender concerns in countries where the MDG framework is being institutionalized through the use of MDG needs assessments, MDG progress reports, and MDG task forces. In Jordan, for example, the capacity of the Department of Statistics to develop gender-disaggregated MDG data was enhanced.

36. In Kazakhstan, UNDP supported the publication of a study entitled "The Status of Women and Gender Equality in Kazakhstan". It highlights the main challenges and provides a concrete basis for gender-responsive policy, programming and resource allocation through the use of gender-disaggregated data.

37. In Mexico, the use of gender-related development index (GDI) and the gender empowerment measure (GEM) in federal states and municipalities provides for comparisons of the advancement of human development levels all 32 states and municipalities in the country.

38. Initiatives have also been undertaken to contribute to the current policy dialogue on pro-poor growth, gender equality and economic opportunity to demonstrate that unpaid work should be recognized in strategies to achieve the MDGs and on how to use remittances for gender-responsive local development.

Goal 3. Communication and visibility:

39. The Gender Unit and the Gender Programme Team in BDP mounted a successful week-long gender event at the beginning of the year. It was designed to provide visibility and recognition to the often-overlooked work of country offices in the area of gender mainstreaming and to demonstrate that dynamic gender focal points, committed Resident representatives, and innovative staff at all levels – men as well as women – are making UNDP programmes more effective and sustainable by integrating gender equality issues and promoting women's empowerment.

40. The 'gender mainstreaming workspace' has been completed and is available through the UNDP intranet. The workspace is particularly helpful for countries involved in the Gender Mainstreaming Initiative, as it provides a resource base on gender issues and a forum for sharing materials, terms of reference, project documents and good practices. The workspace contains news, policy notes, guidelines and toolkits, UNDP publications and external resources, archived replies to network queries, archives of e-discussions, access to the gender expert roster, and the 'gender tools marketplace'. This is in line with the corporate knowledge management roadmap of the organization.

41. The Bratislava Regional Centre has an active virtual network of gender experts in the Europe and the CIS region and has updated the Gender Mainstreaming Practitioner's Handbook.

42. A summary of results and recommendations from a technical workshop held with the participation of leading gender experts from the United Nations system, the larger development community and academia on ways to improve the GDI and the GEM, has been incorporated into the special annex section of the Human Development Report (HDR) 2006 and published in the *Journal for Human Development*. Chapter 2 of HDR 2006, on water for human consumption, includes data on time spent by women and girls in collecting water.

43. Ongoing targeted support on gender is being provided to a number of national human development report teams.

44. Initial results of the support provided by the capacity-building initiative of the GTTF have been encouraging. For example, in Liberia, indicators and performance monitoring frameworks were developed to track the progress of the country office in meeting gender equality commitments. In Lesotho, the capacity of the United Nations Gender Theme Group was enhanced, resulting in a common approach for advocating for increased participation of women in the 2007 elections and engendering the census process. In Mexico, GTTF support helped the country office provide a 12-week formal training on gender for all staff. An online version of the course is being designed for new staff members. An evaluation of GTTF initiatives is planned for next year to ensure that good practices and lessons learned are documented.

45. The UNDP Japan Women in Development (WID) Fund webpage has been finalized in English. It features a wealth of good practices, tools and methodologies generated from UNDP/Japan WID Fund projects and is available at http://www.undp.org/women/japan/index.shtml.

Goal 4. Core and non-core financial resources aligned with policy commitments

46. To support the implementation of the gender action plan, 2006-2007, UNDP has allocated $10 million from its core resources to match the funds provided by the Government of the Netherlands. In 2006, $5 million was allocated to facilitate the internalization of gender mainstreaming in UNDP. Specifically, funds were provided to support the GMI in 50 countries and for global and cross-practice initiatives that helped to (a) strengthen accountability mechanisms for achieving gender equality results within UNDP; (b) refine global measurements of progress on gender equality; (c) identify methods to engender macro-economic frameworks through gender-sensitive public job creation and using remittances for gender-responsive development; and (d) foster expanded partnerships and advocacy for gender equality and the advancement of women. Resources were also allocated to establish two new posts for the Gender Team. Five million dollars will be used for similar activities in 2007.

47. Following a gender review of the BCPR portfolio with support from the GTTF, BCPR has allocated 10 per cent of its resources to strengthening gender mainstreaming in the implementation of its 2006 work plan in the areas of mine action, demobilization, disarmament and reintegration, security sector reform, and conflict prevention. An eight-point agenda for gender equality in crisis prevention and recovery has been integrated into the BCPR five-year strategy (2007 -2011).

48. RBAS has allocated over $500,000 in support of gender equality initiatives and projects in the Arab States region. RBAS is committed to mobilizing resources with partners and regional agencies for follow-up and implementation of the recommendations made in the Arab Human Development Report, whose theme is gender equality, following its launch in December 2006.

49. RBAP has allocated an additional $500,000 to its Asia-Pacific gender mainstreaming programme for monitoring progress on gender equality issues in the region.

50. The sum of $2.8 million has been allocated for the RBA Regional Gender Programme to strengthen regional and national institutions responsible for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

51. RBLAC mobilized $2 million for interventions in the area of gender and parliamentary development, the MDGs and maternal mortality, malnutrition, women's economic empowerment and entrepreneurship.

52. The UNDP/Japan WID Fund has supported five projects amounting to $1.3 million in the Africa, Latin America and Europe and the CIS regions, in the areas of capacity building of women leaders at the national and local levels; economic empowerment of women and sustainable livelihood in post-conflict situations; promoting a gender perspective in disaster management; and violence against women.

53. The Government of Spain has contributed $2.5 million to the GTTF. The Gender Team is in the process of programming the funds.

III. Lessons learned

54. The leadership role of UNDP in developing national human development reports and MDG reports has been critical in bringing gender perspectives into policy instruments and in monitoring and reporting progress on gender equality and the empowerment of women. The MDG reports and NHDRs are increasingly becoming vehicles for gender mainstreaming in development programming at the country level, which necessitates the use of gender analysis, gender disaggregated data and the effective participation of women in policymaking. It is therefore vital that UNDP continue to expand its support in this area of work.

55. The 2005 MYFF report analysis reveals that although the MYFF gender driver is better understood now than previously, it needs to be refined it to better capture the progress made in all aspects of UNDP programming.

56. Some progress has been made in tracking results, but more work is required in the development of indicators and measurement tools, including measuring staff performance in producing gender-equality results.

57. Although significant results have been achieved in addressing gender equality issues through the technical approach, there is a need to invest time and resources in advocacy so as to deepen the consensus on gender equality within UNDP and to increase the visibility of gender issues in the work of the organization.

58. To sustain and increase the gender mainstreaming momentum generated so far, resources must be allocated regularly, predictably and in sufficient amounts.

59. Although efforts have been made to strengthen the gender mainstreaming machinery of UNDP, gaps and weaknesses still exist at the headquarters, regional and country levels. Reports from the field indicate that gender mainstreaming is more often than not an additional or secondary responsibility of a junior staff member. There is an urgent need to appoint gender advisors in all the regional centres to further strengthen the UNDP Gender Team at headquarters and to address weaknesses at the country level.

60. More emphasis should be placed on inter-organizational collaboration to promote gender equality at the country level. The UNCT gender thematic groups require more capacity and resources, while the expertise of UNIFEM needs to be fully utilized.

IV. Some highlights from country offices, 2006

Democratic governance

61. Initiatives supported by UNDP in Ukraine led to the development of the 'National Strategy and Action Plan for Advancing Gender Equality'. A law was also adopted ensuring equal access to justice and prohibiting gender-based discrimination with regard to employment.

62. In Belarus, a UNDP/Japan WID Fund project supported the drafting of the 'National Action Plan on Gender Equality for 2006 – 2010' and the 'Gender Equality Law'. As a result of all those activities and campaigns, women's participation in the Parliament rose to 30 per cent, and two women who were active

participants in the project activities were successful in winning seats in the Lower Chamber of the Parliament.

63. In Bangladesh, a 'Parliamentary Caucus on Gender' has been formed with men and women members of parliament to mainstream gender in Parliament. 45 newly elected women members of parliament were trained in the areas of parliamentary practice, gender, governance and development.

64. Support provided by UNDP through its democratic governance programme in organizing the first international forum for women parliamentarians in Algeria on the topic of 'Women's political participation' resulted in the creation of a permanent forum for Algerian women parliamentarians.

65. In Bhutan, UNDP is working with the National Commission for Women and Children on the first formalized project in the country with specific focus on women's empowerment and protection issues.

Poverty reduction

66. In Sierra Leone, the poverty reduction strategy papers took into account the fact that poverty and marginalization are pervasive among women. A national food security initiative, launched by the President, provided a basis for advocating for improved agricultural practices and sustainable microfinance, both of which target women specifically.

67. In the three northern regions of Armenia, UNDP supported an income-generation and job creation programme for women-headed households. Women's cooperatives were established for marketing agricultural produce, and women were actively involved in every aspect of the design, planning and implementation of the programme.

68. In Pakistan, the 'Women's Access to Capital and Technology' project, a partnership between UNDP and the private sector, has expanded credit and savings facilities to women clients nationwide. Notable achievements include forging alliances with civil society organizations to identify clients; downstreaming the bank's client base to village and rural areas; and mechanizing systems in favor of creditworthy customers for repeat lending.

HIV/AIDS

69. Under the 'Multiple Responses for HIV/AIDS (2005-2008)' project, UNDP has been working with UNAIDS Ecuador and with the national AIDS programme in Ecuador to elaborate a gender-focused national strategic plan for preventing HIV/AIDS. The reform of the national aids law takes into account gender-based vulnerability and the need for appropriate responses. In an effort to galvanize grass-roots advocacy for human rights and gender equality, UNDP is collaborating with UNIFEM to support the creation of a national network for women living with HIV/AIDS.

70. In Angola, the establishment of the 'Association of Women Living with HIV/AIDS' has been a major achievement, as discriminatory cultural practices are strong in Angola. The Association, with support from UNDP, launched a national radio and seminar campaign, which has resulted in more informed attention to the situation of women in the worst-affected province of the country.

71. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, the UNDP programme 'Regional Empowerment and Action to Contain HIV/AIDS (REACH)' has provided support to breakthrough projects designed by women, girls and youth. Targeted initiatives for vulnerable groups such as sex workers, the wives of prisoners, female drug users and female students were also implemented, and a 'people living with HIV/AIDS' (PLWHA) group has been established. Women comprise 50 per cent of the project staff.

Environment and energy

72. In Bahrain, the national environmental strategy, focusing on water and coastal management, has been finalized with UNDP support. The strategy emphasizes the important role of women in environmental management, as well as the significance of their contribution through involvement in environmental non-governmental organizations. Of the 64 members of the professional cadre that produced reports for the strategy, 18 were women, and several of them led working groups made valuable contributions to the reports. UNDP support for the formulation of a national environmental management framework and a sectoral policy on water and sanitation has ensured that both policy documents address gender issues specifically.

73. In an effort to influence environmental policy in Mexico to incorporate a gender perspective, the 'Women's Blue Agenda' was developed with the participation of the gender and environment network, the Ministry of Environment and the Mexican Institute of Water Technology. The Women's Blue Agenda integrates the analysis and reflections of urban and rural women, mestizo and indigenous people of Mexico, all of whom share a common problem: access to safe water, in adequate quantity.

74. In Nepal, the comprehensive rural energy policy, supported by UNDP and the World Bank, supported the creation of gender-balanced community organizations and functional groups to manage rural energy systems such as micro-hydroelectric, biogas, improved cooking stoves and solar photovoltaics. Equal participation by women has ensured that gender considerations are an integral part of activity prioritization and funding. Rural energy monitoring systems collect and analyse gender-disaggregated data on a quarterly basis, which then feed into the overall district-level planning and budgeting process.

Crisis prevention and recovery

75. In post-conflict Eritrea, gender was factored into the planning and implementation of the reintegration project in which ten thousand rural expellees were successfully reintegrated, with priority given to women-headed households. An integrated community-based mine action model has also been developed that takes into account the fact that mine action needs the full participation of the whole community – women, men, girls and boys.

76. In Northeast Somalia, the Puntland disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programme included registration of all the armed forces, identification of criteria for 500 individuals to be reintegrated, and the roll-out of the reintegration programme. Women and children constitute 80 per cent of the programme beneficiaries. The programme has also encouraged participation of women in the village and district development committees.

77. In Tajikistan, the International Mine Action Standards were applied. Formulations of mine-risk education policies were developed and coordination mechanisms established. In all victim assistance efforts, emphasis was given to age and gender considerations and to mine victims who are subject to multiple forms of discrimination.

V. Clarification of the respective roles and responsibilities of UNDP and UNIFEM

78. The 2005 independent evaluation of gender mainstreaming in UNDP noted that there appeared to be much confusion among staff and stakeholders about the relationship between UNDP and UNIFEM, and recommended that UNDP define and clarify that relationship. The aim was to define a relationship of mutual benefit based on a clear understanding of the different mandates and comparative advantages of the two organizations. The evaluation made two recommendations:

(a) UNDP must retain and reconfirm its own direct commitment to gender mainstreaming at all levels, and all UNDP staff must be responsible for 'gendering' their work. UNIFEM is an important resource, but it cannot be a substitute for the competence of UNDP itself to undertake gender mainstreaming.

(b) UNDP should appoint a working group to develop specific modalities for cooperating with UNIFEM which would clarify the current confusion on roles and responsibilities including the role of the champion and special adviser.

79. This response takes into account the recommendations of the 2005 independent evaluation of gender mainstreaming in UNDP; the recommendations of the task force established under the leadership of the Executive Director of UNIFEM to clarify roles and responsibilities between UNDP and UNIFEM; and the recommendations made in the report of the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence.

A. Gender equality and the United Nations

80. In its recommendations, the High-Level Panel on System-wide Coherence pinpointed serious gaps in United Nations capacity to meet the gender-equality needs of its members in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment. The establishment of a well-structured, well-resourced 'gender entity' subsuming three existing bodies, including UNIFEM, will go a long way towards achieving these objectives. The new gender architecture is expected to provide a stronger impetus to achieving gender equality results across all United Nations organizations in a coordinated manner. While awaiting the final results of the inter-governmental process, UNDP welcomes this recommendation.

81. The relationship between UNIFEM and UNDP and its performance on gender equality should be framed in relation to the overall United Nations system, particularly as both organizations have system-wide responsibilities and mandates. The focus must be on strengthening the partnership between UNDP, as chair of the UNDG and manager of the resident coordinator system, and UNIFEM, as the United Nations women's fund, to ensure that the United Nations system is able to provide coherent, timely, high-quality support to help countries deliver on their commitments to gender equality. Given the universal field presence of UNDP, it will continue to provide leadership for 'gendering' the CCA/UNDAF processes.

82. UNIFEM will take the lead on coordinating gender equality issues in the UNCTs where it has a presence either through the regional gender theme groups or UNCT gender theme groups. These arrangements will continue until the new gender entity establishes its presence worldwide.

83. It must be noted that UNIFEM already plays a catalytic role as chair of the task force on gender equality in UNDG, and it is developing mechanisms for greater accountability of United Nations organizations for delivering on gender equality results through the development of the United Nations 'gender scorecard'. A good example of complementary roles is the recent initiative on joint UNCT reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. In the spirit of United Nations reform, delivering as one, UNDP, together with UNIFEM and members of the UNDG, facilitated the preparation and submission of joint UNCT reports to the 36th and 37th sessions of the Committee.

B. Gender equality and UNDP

84. The report of the Secretary-General's High Level Panel recognizes that promoting gender equality is and should remain the mandate of the entire United Nations system. Achieving gender equality is a core commitment of UNDP. In line with the 1997 Agreed Conclusions of the Economic and Social Council and the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR) of the operational activities for development within the United Nations system, which call upon all United Nations entities to mainstream gender, UNDP will continue to adopt a two-pronged strategy: (a) empowering women; and (b) mainstreaming gender in the work of UNDP so as to achieve gender equality results in accordance with its gender action plan. To achieve development outcomes through its 166 operational offices in 134 countries, UNDP will scale up and expand models developed and tested by UNIFEM as the innovator and torchbearer of the women's movement.

85. The TCPR encourages United Nations organizations to make use of the technical expertise of UNIFEM in implementing their commitment to gender equality. UNIFEM has been given the status of executing agency in areas where it has expertise, and this should help it recover costs for the expert services it provides to other United Nations organizations. Executive Board reports DP/2004/CRP.2 and DP/2005/CRP.2 have set out a framework for strengthening the UNDP-UNIFEM partnership. UNDP and UNIFEM are already engaged in a joint project to implement the gender equality legislation in the Europe and the CIS region. The project is being implemented through the Bratislava Regional Centre following a joint mission to Bratislava by the Director of BDP and the Executive Director of UNIFEM in October 2004. UNIFEM has just concluded a UNDP-supported pilot project on gender and the MDGs, the results of which will inform the work of the MDG support services of UNDP.

86. A joint planning exercise between UNDP and UNIFEM will be undertaken highlighting concrete deliverables by UNIFEM. A memorandum of understanding for joint programming will be concluded in areas where UNIFEM has comparative advantages.

87. UNDP has a dynamic 'gender knowledge network' managed by BDP, with more than 900 members located in UNDP country offices and at headquarters. The main purpose of the network is to bring practitioners together to share experiences, good practices, ideas and information. It allows those in the field working on gender

issues or issues in which there is a need to integrate gender, to benefit from the experiences and resources of others. UNIFEM has been invited to participate in the gender knowledge network so that members can benefit from the technical knowledge of UNIFEM and its expertise on innovative pilots.

88. The Executive Director of UNIFEM was appointed UNDP Champion on Gender in August 2001. A memo circulated to all resident coordinators by the Administrator on 16 August 2001 stated that "she is to serve in her personal capacity in the same way that Regional Bureau heads are championing UNDP's other priority areas. In this capacity her role is to support the UNDP gender programme team and help UNDP fulfill its own commitment to mainstreaming gender". In addition, she is a member of the Administrator's Gender Steering and Implementation Committee and the UNDP Senior Management Team and co-chairs the senior gender task force with the BDP Director. The main responsibility of the task force is to give policy advice to the GSIC. Every two months the UNDP Associate Administrator and the Executive Director of UNIFEM meet to strategize on accelerating the achievement of operational synergies at the regional and country levels.